(b) if so, the details thereon;

(c) whether Government directed the NTC mill management to sanction the above enhanced pay to the workers; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI SHANKARSINH VAGHELA): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. Pursuant to orders of the Hon'ble Supreme Court dated 14.10.2003 in Civil Appeal No. 14572 of 1996 filed by clerical staff unions claiming parity in pay with clerical staff in Corporate Offices, the Government has directed NTC management to sanction the following reliefs:

(1) the basic of employees affected by the Supreme Court order may be fixed with effect from 1.4.2004 by including the following amounts:

(i) Basic Pay as on 1.1.1997 + *Ad-hoc* payments if any + HCA (High Cost Allowance payable to some employees @ Rs. 30/-to Rs. 45/- per month) if any.

(ii) Corresponding DA as on 1.1.1997

(iii) 20% of the (i) + (ii) if there has been no revision since 1987.

(2) The new Basic Pay will be determined by placing the basic in a revised scale of pay, which will be worked out by NTC.

(3) DA would be paid for every point increase above the quarterly average index above 1708 as is being paid to the IDA employees on 100% neutralization basis with effect from 1.4.2004. There will be no revision of HRA and other allowances.

Branches of National Handicraft Development Corporation

†881. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of States in the country where branches of National Handicraft Development Corporation are functioning;

(b) whether any branch of National Handicraft Development Corporation is functioning in Bihar;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) if not, the reasons therefore; and

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(e) whether any proposal to open any branch of National Handicraft Development Corporation is under consideration in the current financial year?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI SHANKARSINH VAGHELA): (a) There is no Corporation in the name of National Handicrafts Development Corporation in the handicrafts sector anywhere in the country.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

Special package for workers in powerloom and handloom sectors

882. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are planning a special package for millions of workers in the powerloom and handloom sectors many of whom have suffered terrible losses due to the liberalization of the economy and have committed suicide and thousands have become jobless;

(b) whether there is a proposal to provide cheap power to this sector keeping in view of the fact that the shortage and high rates of power has hit this sector more than any other; and

(c) whether there is a proposal to open depots to provide cheap raw material to these handloom workers?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI SHANKARSINH VAGHELA): (a) No, Sir. Government has not received any information that due to the liberalization of the economy millions of workers in the powerloom and handloom sectors have suffered terrible losses and have committed suicides and thousands have become jobless.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) There are 94 yarn depots already functioning in the country at various places through which hank yarn is supplied to handloom weavers under the Mill Gate Price Scheme which provides for reimbursement of transport cost on yarn.